

We take pleasure in presenting elsewhere in the JOURNAL a paper read by Dr. Asay at a meeting of the Santa Clara County Society, in which the evidence presented **ASTONISHING IGNORANCE.** during the progress of a rather unusual case at law is extensively abstracted. This case serves to again accentuate the fact that it is exceedingly difficult to get a jury of 12 men to agree upon a verdict in favor of a corporation and against an individual. It also illustrates the astonishing ignorance of some legal practitioners of medicine: It is certainly difficult to imagine a regular and reputable legal practitioner of medicine going upon the witness stand and testifying that, in his belief, a blood clot formed at a certain place on the brain and became organized, and that, subsequently, portions of it broke off and traveled about within the cranium, locating themselves at various places and producing a considerable variety of symptoms. Yet it appears from the article referred to that this actually occurred, and that there was other evidence about as intelligent.

#### PROPRIETARY PHARMACISTS AND STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION JOURNALS.

"The Texas State Medical Association's *Journal*, to begin July 1, will have to dance to the music of the Chicago Octopus (the *Journal A. M. A.*) and its ethics, as to proprietary medicines to be advertised will be prescribed by that organ, or, rather, by its ex-homeopathic editor. He is behind the State Association journal movement in all the States, and in only one State (California) is such a journal paying expenses, and the California journal is bucking against said octopus, and its editor. Simmons (ye editor) "draws the line" at all proprietary medicines the formula of which is not published, or mention is made of any disease in which it is recommended, and under that autocratic ruling—which all State journals must obey or be "unethical"—Antiphlogistine, Antikamnia, Ammonol, Unguentine, Ergo-Apiol (Smith), Pepto Mangan (Gude), Tongaline, Listerine, Peter's peptic Essence, Arsenaurol, Glycerophosphates Compound, Ecthol, Glycothymoline, Upjohn's preparations, and many other of the best preparations owned by the most liberal and prompt-paying firms, will have to be excluded. Getting \$2400 worth of cash advertising to start with, after obeying the ethics of ye Octopus, is easier said than done. Does ye Octopus think these parties are going to give their trade-marked and protected business to every substitutor in Texas? Not much."—*Texas Medical Journal*, May 1905.

[At its last meeting, the Texas State Medical Association voted unanimously to publish its transactions in the form of a monthly journal, and this scheme did not appeal to the editor of the Texas Medical Journal, (hence the "howl") a journal which refers, editorially, to itself as "the red back." One wonders, in passing, what its editorial nick name for itself would be if the color of the binding were gray instead of red.

It is not a pleasure to learn that ours is the only State whose society journal is paying expenses, for we wish them all well. In the article quoted above, the statement is made by inference that our JOURNAL has been "bucking against" the *Journal A. M. A.* because it desired to enforce strict rules governing ethical advertising. This is startlingly amusing to any one at all conversant with the actual facts. Dear "red back," let us enlighten you. We have been "bucking against" the *Journal A. M. A.* not because it desired to enforce any rules governing the nature of advertising matter to be accepted by a decent journal, but

because it flagrantly violated all of its own rules and the very fundamental principles involved. The editor of the "red back" may like to see the medical profession used in exploiting the nostrums which he mentions, but there are a good many of us who do not want the dirty dollars they spend in advertising, even if they are the "most liberal and prompt paying firms." That one quotation explains the whole thing; it is a case of dollars vs. decency, and in some quarters, dollars will undoubtedly win. But we believe that there are enough honest men in the medical profession to, when their eyes are opened to the real state of depravity which the dollar seekers would lead them into, insist upon the retention of their own virtue.]

#### PROPRIETARY THERAPEUTICS.

H. C. Wood, Jr., Philadelphia (*Journal A. M. A.*, June 10), considers that the increasing use of proprietary drugs is exceedingly detrimental to the best interests of medicine. He refers more particularly to nostrums or mixtures and not to definite chemical compounds which may be the property of some manufacturing druggist. While these latter may not be an unmixed blessing, whatever objections he has to them are based on essentially different grounds. The great fundamental objection to nostrums is that to all set and unalterable formulæ, they must necessarily be a misfit in the ever-changing aspects of disease. Another is their secret or semi-secret nature, and this is all the more dangerous when it is masked by a deceptive show of frankness. There is no universal assurance that even the alleged composition is the true one, and some of those that publish a formula attempt to obscure the real nature of their mixtures by using uncommon names of well-known drugs or including some unfamiliar ingredient which may be assumed to have some special virtue. A common defense of these nostrums is that of their value as property. Wood asks: How have the manufacturers acquired such valuable property rights? Have they hired men to be sick to prove the virtues of their compounds, or has the medical profession been willing to utilize human suffering for the benefit of the nostrum vender? The reasons why these nostrums are so profitable to their manufacturers are, Wood thinks, the imperfect therapeutic instruction given in our medical schools and the extremely lavish and often very shrewd advertising they receive. It has been estimated that \$600,000 is expended annually in advertising secret nostrums, but Wood considers this far short of the true amount. These hundreds of thousands of dollars are paid, he says, out of the physicians' pockets and their patients' lives, and yet the medical profession is blind enough to let the process continue without complaint. The nostrum venders, he says, at a conservative estimate, have obtained control of the reading columns of two-thirds of the medical journals of this country, and it is time, he thinks, to call a halt.

#### Examination by State Board.

The next regular examination of candidates to obtain license to practice in this state, will be held in San Francisco and also in Los Angeles on July 19th. The necessary credentials, affidavit, etc., must be filed with the board at least two weeks before the examination, in order to give ample time for the proper scrutiny of all credentials. The board apparently intends to examine very carefully all credentials presented, and thus endeavor to avoid the frauds and attempts at fraud which have been committed in other states. All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, Dr. Chas. L. Tisdale, 530 California Street, San Francisco.

#### Will Talk at Portland.

Professor Hirschburg of Berlin University, the specialist in ophthalmology, will make an address before the American Medical Association.